

No More Sacrifice (Part 1)

Will the sins we commit after salvation be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ? Some say an emphatic “no!” because our sins are completely covered under the blood of Calvary. Some say an emphatic “yes!” because the nature of Christ’s judgment of our sins at the Bema is not legal, as if to determine our position in Him, but rather it is disciplinary, like a father determining the necessary punishment for his child’s misbehavior. Others say “yes and no,” and some aren’t sure. But what saith the Scriptures?

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. Hebrews 10:26-27

What a frightening prospect! It is the expectation of no more sacrifice for sins for those who continue in willful, persistent sin. To whom does this refer?

Those of an Arminian theological persuasion interpret this to mean a Christian who persists in heinous sin can lose his salvation. Another view is held by some from the Calvinist theological tradition, who believe this admonition refers to so-called, professing Christians that have demonstrated by their lifestyle they were never saved in the first place. I believe both of these theological positions are incorrect biblically. However, the Arminian position appears to be closer to the truth than the Calvinist position. For the Arminian sees something as being lost, and he is right about that. But to suggest salvation is what is lost is a doctrinal error. How can that which is eternal be lost? The Bible very clearly teaches the doctrine of eternal security. Those who are saved have passed from death unto life. That transaction happened at a point in time in the past, and can never be lost or forfeited. Once saved, always saved. You, dear child of God, have been credited with the righteousness of Christ in your spirit, and you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of God.

How, then, do we understand what is being lost, according to this verse? The key is to remember the scriptural concept of [The Three Tenses of Salvation](#) and then to determine in every scripture passage which salvation is in focus. Is it the salvation of the spirit, resulting in instantaneous justification and positional sanctification – that is, salvation from eternal condemnation (soteriology)? Or is it salvation of the soul, resulting in progressive sanctification over one’s lifetime and positive reward at the Judgment Seat? Unfortunately, many Bible students fail to distinguish between the two and assume all references to salvation in the New Testament refer to salvation of the spirit, that is, salvation by grace through faith alone. Thus, they assume the phrase “saving of the soul” at the end of this passage is soteriological.

But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Hebrews 10:39

It is not hermeneutically accurate to insist that the “saving of the soul” is referring to justification. Our soul is saved (i.e., sanctified) only to the extent we cooperate with God’s working in our lives. There is the prospect of a believer’s soul not being saved (i.e., sanctified) in this life because of foolish, carnal choices to live for self. When that believer stands before Jesus at the Judgment Seat, his soul will be forfeited in the sense that any positive reward will be lost and only negative reward will be given. Instead of hearing, “well done, good and faithful servant” that believer will hear “thou wicked and slothful servant.” And so this passage is not speaking of lost people and their need for justification. It is warning saved people of their need for sanctification, so that that their soul can be deemed “saved” at the Judgment Seat.

How can we know when salvation references are justification-oriented vs. sanctification-oriented? Here is a clue to interpreting salvation passages in the New Testament. Typically, when salvation is mentioned as in the **past** tense, it is referring to salvation from eternal condemnation, or the salvation of the spirit. But when salvation is mentioned as in the **future**, it is referring to the salvation of the soul, discipleship that leads to rewards.

The key to answering the question, “Will my sins after salvation be judged at the Bema?” is specifying which aspect, or plane, of man’s being is affected by the judgment. If we are speaking of the plane of our spirit becoming justified, then we must emphatically say, “no!” Our sins after salvation will never be judged at the Judgment Seat, for they are under the blood of Calvary and, therefore, eternally forgiven. However, if we are speaking of the plane of the soul becoming sanctified, then we must emphatically say “yes!” Our sins after salvation will be judged at the Judgment Seat, if we do not confess them as sin, here and now, and put them under the continued cleansing blood of Jesus – 1 John 1:7. We will attempt to substantiate this point scripturally as we go along.

In the extreme case of someone who lives willfully, carnally, and selfishly (however God judges that), there remains no more sacrifice for sins. We must understand this statement in reference to the plane of the soul and the matter of rewards, not as a reference to the plane of the spirit and the matter of eternal security. Over the course of the next three articles we will examine seven truths that have bearing on our question.

Truth #1: God does not listen to the prayers of saints who continue in known sin

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me. Psalm 66:18-20

Behold, the Lord 's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Isaiah 59:1-2

If you have known sin in your life and continue to harbor that sin, God will not hear your prayers. However, if you confess your sins and keep short accounts with God, he will hear your prayers.

What is the implication of verses like these? By not listening when we are praying, God brings a form of temporal judgment upon us. Why? Because our fellowship with Him is marred. Are these verses speaking of the spirit plane of man or the soul plane? Obviously the soul plane, because on the spirit plane we are completely righteous and all of our sins have been forgiven; they are under the blood of Calvary legally and positionally. They are no longer an issue. But on the soul plane there is the matter of fellowship with God, and that fellowship is damaged by sin.

Truth #2: God removes His hand of spiritual blessing when we continue in sin

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Proverbs 28:13

Notice the implication of this verse. The Lord does not show mercy to those saints who conceal their sins and refuse to confess and forsake them. He deals in judgment, not mercy.

Furthermore, from Psalm 1 we learn that God's hand of spiritual blessing is upon the righteous – those who live uprightly, without sin in their lives – but He judges those who walk in sinfulness. Clearly, these are references to the soul plane and not the spirit plane.

Truth #3: God does not forgive the sins of those saints who refuse to forgive others

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:14-15

Wait a minute! How can God not forgive the sins of saints when we are told plainly, "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:17)? Again, we must think on two planes, not merely one. On the soteriological plane we are forgiven, but on the sanctification plane we are not forgiven if we do not forgive others. Thus, we are eternally secure, even if we don't forgive others, but we face God's judgment, both here and now and at the Judgment Seat, if we refuse to forgive.

We will discuss additional truths in [Parts 2](#) and 3.